

Tan Cheng Lock (1887-1960), Politician

The Tan Cheng Lock Private Archives consists of documents covering all aspects of Tan Cheng Lock's public life. The most important files are those relating to his leadership of the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) during its formative period, the early years of the UMNO-MCA Alliance and the role he played in the struggle for Malaya's independence. The Tan Cheng Lock Private Archives is a valuable source for the study of Malaysian history for the period immediately before and after independence.

Tun Dato' Sir Tan Cheng Lock was a Malaysian nationalist and founder of the MCA. He was the Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements from 1923 to 1934 and became the unofficial Member of the Governor's Executive Council from 1933 to 1935. He founded the MCA and became the first president from 1949 to 1958. In 1952, Tan Cheng Lock and the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) under Tunku Rahman's leadership contested the election as partners. In 1953, he brought MCA into the national coalition "Alliance" together with UMNO, working towards the independence of the Federation of Malaya, which subsequently incorporated the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) in 1955. Tan Cheng Lock was a successful businessman in the Malayan rubber, tapioca and gambier industries. He was best remembered for his contributions in the business and political arenas and his work for integrating the Chinese and the Indian communities to the nascent Malayan society.